

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 3835

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE PFOR XG

SUBJECT: CSCE: FURTHER SOVIET REACTION TO GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON
HUMAN CONTACTS AND INFORMATION

REF: GENEVA 3772

1. SOVIET DEL HEAD KOVALEV ASKED TO SEE US URGENTLY MAY 23
TO SAY HE THOUGHT SOVIET RESPONSE TO WESTERN GLOBAL INITIATIVE
HAD BEEN "MISUNDERSTOOD." KOVALEV, WHO WAS QUITE AGITATED,
SAID THAT ONLY 5 OR 6 POINTS IN SOVIET LIST OF FIFTY PRO-
POSED CHANGES (SEE REFTEL) WERE "POLITICAL" QUESTIONS.
THE REMAINDER WERE "TECHNICAL" OR "QUESTIONS OF STYLE."
KOVALEV ENUMERATED A LIST OF FIVE "POLITICAL QUESTIONS":
(A) PLACEMENT OF WORD "FORTHWITH" IN LAST PARA OF HUMAN
CONTACTS INTRODUCTION; (B) REMAINING SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES IN
TRAVEL TEXT; (C) SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES IN INFORMATION INTRODUC-
TION; (D) SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES IN JOURNALISTS TEXT;
(E) RADIO BROADCASTING.

2. WE POINTED OUT TO KOVALEV THAT HIS LIST OF 5 POINTS
ACTUALLY COVERED 21 INDIVIDUAL ISSUES, EACH OF WHICH
WOULD REQUIRE LONG AND ARDOUS NEGOTIATIONS, AND ASKED
HIM IF THIS MEANT SOVIETS WERE PREPARED TO DROP THE REST
OF THEIR PROPOSED CHANGES. KOVALEV REPLIED THAT THE OTHER
"TECHNICAL" AND "STYLISTIC" POINTS WOULD OF COURSE HAVE
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TO BE NEGOTIATED TOO. UNDER OUR QUESTIONING HE EVEN DENIED

THAT ABOVE LIST WAS REALLY A SOVIET LIST, BUT SAID IT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED TO HIM BY "SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES."
(KOVALEV WAS EVIDENTLY REFERRING TO AUSTRIAN AND SWISS REPS, WHO ADMANTLY CLAIM LIST WAS GIVEN TO THEM AS A GENUINE LIST OF POINTS SOVIETS CONSIDER POLITICALLY IMPORTANT.)

3. WE TOLD KOVALEV FIRMLY THAT GLOBAL INITIATIVE CONTAINED SIGNIFICANT WESTERN CONCESSIONS AND WAS INTENDED TO FORM THE BASIS OF A BALANCED RESULT IN THESE SUBJECT AREAS. THE SOVIET LIST OF FIFTY PROPOSED CHANGES WAS MOST DISAPPOINTING, SINCE IT WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF ACCEPTING WESTERN CONCESSIONS WHILE NEGOTIATING ON ALL THE OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES. WE SAID NATO GROUP WAS CONSIDERING WHETHER TO WITHDRAW THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE IN VIEW OF NEGATIVE SOVIET RESPONSE AND START ALL OVER AGAIN ON SUBJECT-BY-SUBJECT NEGOTIATIONS ON BASIS OF FORMER POSITIONS. WE STRESSED THAT WE DID NOT BELIEVE ANY NATO COUNTRY WOULD BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON BASIS OF SOVIET LIST AND URGED KOVALEV TO IDENTIFY ISSUES WHICH GENUINELY NEED TO BE NEGOTIATED, AND DROP THE REST. WE SAID THAT OTHERWISE WE FORESAW A VERY LONG NEGOTIATION INDEED, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT MOST DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE THE BALANCED RESULT WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED IN TIME FOR A STAGE III IN JULY.

4. COMMENT: OUR MEETING WITH KOVALEV LASTED THREE HOURS, DURING WHICH WE WERE SUBJECTED TO CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE. SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE CONVERSATION KOVALEV LOST HIS COOL, THREATENED US, AND EXPRESSED PERSONAL DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE CHIEF OF THE US DEL. OUR REPLIES TO THESE WOUTBURSTS WERE SIMLY TO REITERATE TIME AND AGAIN HOW DISAPPOINTED WE AND OUR ALLIES WERE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD FAILED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A FAIR COMPROMISE WHICH WOULD ENABLE US TO FINISH STAGE II WITHIN THE SOVIET TIME-FRAME. KOVALEV SAID THE GOLBAL INITIATIVE WAS NOT A COMPROMISE BUT AN ULTIMATUM.

5. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IT IS UP TO THE SOVIETS TO COME UP WITH A MORE SERIOUS RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN GLOBAL INITIATIVE. THEY ARE EVIDENTLY VERY ANXIOUS TO KEEP THE GLOBAL PACKAGE ALIVE, AND START NEGOTIATIONS ON IT
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IMMEDIATELY, BUT IF THE WEST ENTERS SUCH NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE SOVIET LIST WE WILL HAVE GIVEN AWAY ALL THE CONCESSIONS MADE IN THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE WITHOUT RECEIVING ANYTHING SIGNIFICANT IN RETURN, AND WILL THEN BE FORCED TO NEGOTIATE ON ALL OUR REMAINING OBJECTIVES WITHOUT ANY LEVERAGE AT ALL. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WE DOUBT THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THE REASONABLE AND BALANCED RESULTS WE WANT IN BASKET III. FOR THIS REASON

WE BELIEVE THE SOVIETS SHOULD MAKE A MORE REASONABLE
RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL OFFER BEFORE WE AGREE TO NEGOTIATE
WITH THEM ON THE REMAINING POINTS AT ISSUE. DALE

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